

Information on Scouts-BSA-Aged Youth

- Give them a sense of purpose. These youth want to change the world. Ask the question, “What do you want to change about your community or our world?” Talk about how joining Scouts offers a way to do that!
- Offer opportunities for growth.
- Get social and relatable.
- They want to see kids that look like them doing cool things via videos, pictures, and social media. They don’t just want to hear about it.
- They are building their personal brand already.
- If you remember being this age, you may recall that, at this age, the opinions of peers are incredibly important, whether they admit it or not.
- They are often mortified by public praise. Public praise works well with younger kids, but the older youth often do not appreciate this, and it could reduce their interest in joining.
- For older youth, be mindful of the negative effect that seeing adults in uniforms may have on them. It may be more effective to dress in something other than the full BSA field uniform when interacting with this group.
- Some members of this group may be interested in increased independence and pulling away a bit from their parents. Talk about the independence that Scouts teaches and the “Scout led” aspects of the program.
- Kids don’t care what you know until they know that you care. They can tell if you’re being genuine from a mile away, and that sticks with them.
- They want new friends, but they probably won’t actually say that. Talk about the opportunity to make new friends and go on adventures together.
- Members of this group often respond to challenges. For example, you might say something like “I don’t know if y’all could handle trekking in the wilderness for a week,” or “I bet this group is faster than this group,” etc. Have your sarcasm and wit ready, because they will make comments and fire back at you, but being able to respond in a fun and relatable way is a quick way to build that trust and make them more likely to listen. The kid making fun of you or the program at the table in the back may actually be the most interested and could get the most from the program.